

The Evolvement of Semi-Presidentialism in Taiwan

Yu-shan Wu 吳玉山

Institute of Political Science, Academia Sinica, Taiwan

中央研究院政治學研究所籌備處

Since the amendment of the ROC's constitution in 1997, Taiwan has evolved into a semi-presidential system. However, this constitutional framework did not determine where the ultimate political power resides when the president is not from the political party that controls the parliament. As it turned out, Taiwan opted for a “presidential supreme” variant that is prevalent in the post-Leninist and post-colonial semi-presidential countries. The operation of the system brought about great tension between the president and the parliament in 2000-2008. Has Taiwan stabilized as a presidential supreme system? Would it evolve towards a “compromise” mode? This paper starts with the president's role in a semi-presidential system (broker, partner, imposer, commander), looks into direct and indirect presidential control of government (appointing/dismissing powers vs. control via party and parliament), and assesses the possibility of Taiwan shifting away from presidential supremacy to compromise.